

Message Text

SECRET

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DRAFTED BY EA/ROC:MKLOSSON:CB

APPROVED BY EA - OVARMSTRONG

EUR/WE - MR. WORREL (SUBS)

PM/SAS - MR. WINSHIP

P - MR. HABIB

EA/ROC - MR. LEVIN

S/S - APSHANKLE

NSC-MR. GLEYSTEN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

S E C R E T STATE 220257

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, TW, UK, US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED SALE OF UK RAPIER AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM TO
TAIWAN

1. CLARK MACGREGOR, VICE PRESIDENT OF UNITED TECHNOLOGIES CORPORATION, PLANS TO GO TO LONDON TO PROMOTE THE SALE TO TAIWAN OF FOUR RAPIER MISSILE SYSTEMS, WHICH, ACCORDING TO PLANS, WILL BE PRODUCED IN THE UK BY BRITISH AIRCRAFT CORPORATION AND THEN ASSEMBLED IN THE US BY A SUBSIDIARY OF UNITED TECHNOLOGIES (NORDEN). THE RAPIER IS A BRITISH-DESIGNED AND MANUFACTURED ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILE SYSTEM FOR USE AGAINST LOW-FLYING AIRCRAFT.

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2. WHILE THE USG HAS GIVEN A FAVORABLE ADVISORY OPINION ON

THE SALE OF THIS SYSTEM TO TAIWAN, WE DO NOT WISH TO INFLUENCE THE UK'S HANDLING OF THIS MATTER, PARTICULARLY AS IT IS RELATED TO SENSITIVE CHINA POLICY CONSIDERATIONS. ACCORDINGLY, SHOULD MACGREGOR ASK THE EMBASSY TO APPROACH HMG ON THIS MATTER, YOU SHOULD TURN THE REQUEST ASIDE AND EXPLAIN THAT WE BELIEVE THIS SALE SHOULD BE WORKED OUT WITHOUT USG INVOLVEMENT.

3. SHOULD MACGREGOR SUGGEST THAT THIS RELUCTANCE CONFLICTS WITH A MORE FORTHCOMING DEPARTMENT RESPONSE LAST JUNE,

YOU MAY NOTE THAT WE DID INFORM THE BRITISH EMBASSY THAT THE USG HAD NO OBJECTION TO THE SALE. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT WISH TO GO BEYOND THIS AND AS THE UK IS ALREADY AWARE OF THIS FACT, NO PURPOSE IS SERVED BY RESTATING IT. FYI: IN RESPONSE TO A LETTER FROM MACGREGOR TO GEORGE VEST, A DEPARTMENT OFFICER ORALLY INFORMED THE UK EMBASSY THAT WE HAD NO OBJECTION TO THE SALE. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, URGE THE BRITISH TO APPROVE IT. END FYI. ROBINSON

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